As per the Sugarcane Control order issued under the Essential Commodities Act mills are obliged to pay the Statutory Minimum Price of sugarcane to growers and powers to enforce such payments have been delegated by the Central Government to State Governments. However, in the case of State Advised Prices of sugarcane which are substantially higher than the statutory minimum price, enforcement is not legally possible under the sugarcane control order. In such cases, State Governments concerned have to use their good offices to see that growers are paid their dues at the higher rates.

In order to prevent the accumulation of arrears of cane dues of farmers which can lead to unfortunate law and order situations, State Governments have been advised to follow a more reasonable pricing policy and allow mills to share their profits with growers as per the Bhargava formula.

[*69. *Transferred to 1st December*, 1992]

Amendment of Urban Land Ceiling Act

*70. SHRI VITHALBHAI M. PATEL : Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have recently announced that there would be an amendment in the Urban Land Ceiling Act to encourage building activities;

(b) if so, what are the proposals in this regard;

(c) whether it is also a fact that there is a demand from farmers and Cooperative Housing Societies to scrap the Urban Land Ceiling Act; and

(d) if so, what are the details in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SHEILA KAUL) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) On the basis of discussions with the State Governments and experts and taking into consideration representations made by various interest groups proposals for amendment to the Urban Land Ceiling Act have been formulated. No final decision on these proposals has been taken by the Government.

Requirement of Pig Iron for Foundry Units in West Bengal

*71. SHRI SUNIL BASU RAY :
SHRI MOHAMMED AMIN :

Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware that several cast iron foundry units in West Bengal are on the verge of closure and others are turning sick following the scarcity of pig iron, the basic raw material for the industry;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) what is the annual requirement of pig iron for West Bengal foundries and the allocation made for them; and

(d) what remedial measures have been taken so far by Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SANTOSH MOHAN DEV) : (a) and (b) About 10% of the cast iron foundry units in West Bengal are reported to be closed for various reasons such as financial problems, inadequate power supply and lack of orders. Representations have been received regarding shortage of pig iron being faced by some units. This is mainly due to the poor lifting of material against offers made to the West Bengal Small Industries Corporation (WBSIC) by main producers.

(c) Most of the foundry units in West Bengal are in the small scale sector. The requirement of pig iron for small scale industries including foundry units in West Bengal as indicated by Director of Industries, West Bengal, is 1,00,000 tonnes for the year 1992-93. The requirement of pig iron of small scale industries is being met on priority basis. The total allocation of pig iron made by the Development Commissioner for Iron & Steel (DCI&S) for small scale units of West Bengal including foundry units during the year 1992-93 is 75,000 tonnes (33,500 tonnes to the WBSIC

and 41,500 tonnes to the Indian Foundry Association). The quantities lifted so far are 39,924 tonnes (8,464 tonnes by the WBSIC and 31,460 tonnes by the Indian Foundry Association). Requirements of industries other than small scale units are met directly by the main producers in accordance with their distribution guidelines.

(d) The allocation of pig iron made for small scale industries in West Bengal during the current year is 46.3% higher than the last year. DCI&S has requested WBSIC to respond quickly to offers made by the main producers. He has also advised the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant and Indian Iron and Steel Company to supply directly to the consumers the quantity against lapsed offers.

There is an overall shortage of pig iron in the country. As against the total estimated demand of 21 lakh tonnes in 1992-93, the total expected production is 17.92 lakh tonnes. To enable pig iron user industries to meet their full requirements, pig iron has been made freely importable. Import duty on pig iron has also been reduced from 55% to 35% with effect from 16th January, 1992. Government have also taken steps to encourage production of pig iron in the private sector.

Abolition of Capitation Fee in Engineering Colleges

*72. SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA : SHRI SARADA MOHANTY :

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 3362 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 7th August, 1992 and state :

(a) whether Government are aware that despite ban on charging capitation fee in Engineering and Medical Colleges, this is being collected in the name of donations and the seats are allotted in exchange of monetary consideration;

(b) whether any suitable device to check up this malpractice has since been suggested recently or was suggested before;

(c) whether admission on merit through entrance examination would be worked out to eliminate possible lacunae in the system; and

(d) whether Government propose to issue any guidelines in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH) : (a) According to the information furnished by AICTE, no case of charging of capitation fee by the engineering colleges approved by it has come to notice.

(b) While giving approval for setting up of engineering colleges or starting a new course, AICTE lays down that the college or its management will not charge capitation fee in any form whatsoever. In order to ensure strict compliance, these conditions are now registered.

(c) and (d) Guidelines to be followed for admission to engineering colleges have been notified by the AICTE. These guidelines provide for admissions based on entrance examination also.

Irrigation Potential in the Country

*73. SHRI SHIV PRATAP MISHRA : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) what is the estimated gap between country's total irrigation potential and its actual utilization; and

(b) what steps Government propose to take to bridge the gap ?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI V. C. SHUKLA): (a) At the end of 1991-92, the gap between Country's Irrigation Potential created and its actual utilization has been estimated at about 8.1 million hectares.

(b) To reduce this gap, the Government proposes to review and make Command Area Development Programme more effective and to bring large minor irrigation schemes also under its purview. Improvement of old irrigation systems through modernisation is also envisaged.